DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 459 858 IR 058 410

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TITLE A Study of the Attitudes of Library and Information Science Students about Censoring Materials on the Web in a Library Environment.
PUB DATE 2001-08-13
NOTE 37p.; Master of Library and Information Science Research Paper, Kent State University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses (040) -- Tests/Questionnaires (160)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Access to Information; Age Differences; *Censorship; Comparative Analysis; Graduate Students; Higher Education; *Librarian Attitudes; Library Education; *Library Services; *Pornography; Predictor Variables; Questionnaires; Sex Differences; Student Attitudes; *World Wide Web
IDENTIFIERS Web Sites

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to evaluate attitudes of library science students towards censoring controversial materials on the World Wide Web viewed in the library by patrons. The study suggests that some library science students will have moral dilemmas in supplying information that is contrary to their personal beliefs and that factors such as library type, gender, and age all play a role in whether a librarian supports filtering in a library's online computer facilities. An anonymous questionnaire was developed that asked questions about an individual's background along with a series of questions relating to censoring situations pertaining to sexually oriented Internet sites. Eighty responses were received to the questionnaire. Of those respondents, 63 were female and 17 were male. There was a correlation between the type of library an individual works in and the level of censorship he/she would endorse. School librarians tend to advocate censorship more than any other library affiliation. No significant differentiation between genders was found. The numbers were proportionally similar to one another with females censoring slightly less than males overall, except on the topic of sexually explicit materials, which females tended to censor more than males. In this study, the 30-39 age group tended to be the most censorious. (Contains 13 references.) (Author/MES)

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ED 459 858

Kent State University

A Study of the Attitudes Of Library and Information Science Students About Censoring Materials on the Web In a Library Environment

School of Library and Information Sciences

By
Krista Harney

Kent, Ohio
August 13, 2001

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Master's Research Paper by

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I. INTRODUCTION

The introduction of the World Wide Web into our technological age has created many new problems for librarians. One of these critical issues concerns a foundational principle of the American Library Association (ALA). According to the ALA Code of Ethics, as librarians "We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources."[1] Unfortunately, this idealistic principle holds an air of internal conflict. In today's library, we are faced with a dilemma between our traditional Puritanistic ideology and, at times, the ideas of offending parties. How do we come to terms with giving accessibility to all types of information regardless of our attitudes on the subject? This is an issue that all people, specifically librarians in this essay, have to face at one point in their lives.

The continuing debate on censoring Internet materials has prompted this study on the attitudes of librarians and how it relates to the political schemes of library associations and individuals involved in this debate. Making materials accessible to all people is a stronghold in a democratic society that cannot be ignored but we, as ethical agents, must look at the information available on the web and make the crucial decision whether to make these materials available to those who may not be able to make these decisions themselves. The notion in itself is contrary to everything the ALA and the American Library stand for but proponents of this perspective, such as The Center for Traditional American Family Values, argue that we need to restrict any material that is dangerous to our children since Ohio law states it is illegal to provide minors with

[1] This is the second article in the ALA Code of Ethics, which was adopted June 28, 1995. The full list can be found at http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/ethics.html.

materials that may be harmful or obscene[2]. This debate is exactly what happens every day in this country when a library director makes the decision whether to use censorware on a particular set or all computers in his/her library. This raises the crucial question: are there some extenuating circumstances where censorship should be acceptable? If there were extenuating circumstances, which deems people should enforce censorship, who draws the line between acceptable and unacceptable topics?

There is no straightforward answer to this question. Proponents of absolute freedom of speech would argue there are never any circumstances in which materials should be selected to eliminate any topics. Proponents of absolute censorship advocate that exposing others in the library to pornographic materials creates a harmful and unnerving atmosphere in the library. The vast majority of individuals seem to be caught somewhere in the middle of these two extremes. "That is what makes the free public library such a dangerous place: An institution supported by the community, through universal taxation, dedicated to providing all of the information necessary for an educated populace, thus making democracy a real possibility."[3] Stauffer illustrates in her article *Dangerous Ideas* that in order to have a democratic society, we *must* give full access to all information available on the Internet regardless of the content. It is this free reign in the information pool that gives our society its fluidity and allows for all people and their intellectual property to live together in peace within the structure of a democratic state.

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[2] The Center for Traditional American Family Values available online http://www.tafvohio.com/Libraries.htm

[3] Stauffer, Suzanne. "Dangerous Ideas." *Journal of Information Ethics* 6, no. 2 (Fall 1997): 10-12. Suzanne Stauffer is using sarcasm to illustrate that just because we allow free access to materials doesn't mean that we are a dangerous institution. It means that we are democratic.

Rationale for this Study

This issue faces all librarians at one point of their career or another. There have been several papers written on censorship, but of the ones available to this study, none of them directly address the attitudes on censorship of the people who deal with this topic on a daily basis. The attitudes of the people in charge of the library facilities play a significant role in whether the library will use a filtering system or whether they allow all types materials to be viewed in their library. Since it is the goal of this library school to train potential librarians, it is essential to find out what kind of attitudes the students of the Kent State University School of Library and Information Science have on this topic. This research should bring some interesting insight into some of the issues librarians face at some time during their careers.

Since both sides of the issue make persuasive cases about censorship it is important to look at all aspects of the issue. Most researchers look at this issue on objective terms, eliminating the emotive quality of the issue and data being collected. The rationale for delving into this area is to discover how censorship impacts the people who will, ultimately, be making the decision whether to filter Internet access in a particular library. Library policies reflect the values of the community they serve and librarians should be conscious of those beliefs as well as the beliefs of the members of the community they serve. This essay will attempt to start the process by taking a look at how librarians feel about these issues. Perhaps in the future someone will take on the vast task of researching community perceptions, but that task is beyond the scope of this research project.

Purpose of Study

This study attempted to put a human face on the issue of censorship. The attitudes of the people involved in the area of Library and Information Science on the issue of censorship was analyzed by studying the students in this professional field. Censorship in the library is such a controversial topic in the library community it is important to see how individuals are reacting to it. In this study, information pertaining to students' attitudes towards censorship was compiled and any relevant factors that might affect a person's attitude on this issue was assessed. The relevant factors that were tested were age, sex, and type of library in which the students were employed. At the end of this study, one would hope to find a correlation between one or more of these factors and whether or not they support censorship.

This study also attempted to investigate if librarians feel personal ethics come in to play when deciding whether to allow certain websites to be viewed and others to be censored. This was done by asking a series of questions related to the topic of sexuality and by asking library school students to rate the level of censorship they feel should be applied to each aspect of this issue. Because of the limited nature of this research project, this topic was the major focus: access to sexually-oriented sites is the most controversial topic on the web and seems to elicit the strongest response among students.

Definition of Terms

Most of the terms in this paper are pretty straightforward, but to clarify any confusion the term 'librarian' is used to describe specifically professional librarians. It is not used to describe paraprofessional or other library staff. This paper also uses terms

pertaining to the World Wide Web. All of the terminology used in regards to the Internet pertains to its accepted definition.

Limitations of the Study

The information gathered for this study will be a composite of opinions from the graduate students at Kent State University School of Library and Information Science. Some of the information will be idealistic since some people involved in the survey process have not worked in a library and have only library school training without life experience or, perhaps, do not have a position of authority to make decisions regarding their library's position on censoring. Even in these cases, this study will still give a glimpse of how the students feel about the subject at this point in their careers. To isolate those who have worked in a library from those who have not, separate result tables for each library type and those who have never worked in a library was created.

Other problems could have arisen from the anonymity of this survey. It is quite possible and understandable that an individual who feels strongly about one side or the other would not react the same if they were confronted face to face with this issue. Some people have never dealt with this problem in their library and can only predict how they would react when confronted with a problem. There is no way to regulate human behavior and therefore one can only generalize from the information provided by the respondents. As a result of this, it is necessary for this study to make generalizations but this does not accurately depict how *all* librarians view censorship but it will give us a glimpse into the issue of censorship and hopefully be a good representation of various viewpoints.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several articles have been written on the topic of censorship of Internet materials. Many of these articles were reviewed to find research on the area of belief systems or attitudes regarding censorship and there were no articles directly pertaining to the attitudes of the individuals who may be doing the censoring. There were, however, several articles pertaining to the ethics of censorship and how legislation, the ALA, and individuals perceive this issue. It is from this foundation that this research project was established pertaining to attitudes about different aspects of sex on the Internet. The literature review will begin by looking at the issue of providing Internet access to all people in our public libraries and from there work up to filtration of Internet materials.

Censorship and Legislation

For the issue of censorship to exist, we must have communal access to the Internet. Many people assert that the Internet should be a right to which all people should have equal access. James Piccininni states, "Throughout the 1990s many libraries and the federal government are adopting measures to insure online access to information to the general public."[4] Piccininni addresses the issue of providing information access to all people regardless of race, gender, religious affiliation, or age. He also comments that people should not only have the right to access the Internet, but they should be able to access it without restriction. "There exists no compelling reason to restrict access to online information except for the financial limitations that many libraries and educational

[4]Piccininni, James. "Information Access: A Right or Privelage?" *Journal of Information Ethics* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1997): 5-7. James Piccininni comments in his 1997 article "Information Access: A Right or Privelage?" that all people should have equal access to information.

institutions face in providing the means to make such access possible."[5] Here he suggests that the only good reason for limiting access to the web is a library that does not have the means to provide Internet access to its patrons.

Once the individual has access to the Internet, via public library or even at home, he/she is faced with the elaborate information network we call the "World Wide Web", or simply the "web". Once we enter the web, it is easy to forget that we have ties to the ethical values of the community we live in. According to Laurence Tribe "...There is a pervasive tendency, even among the most enlightened, to forget that the human values and ideals to which we commit ourselves may indeed be universal and need not depend on how our particular cultures, or latest technologies, carve up the world we live in."[6] In other words, the Constitution of the United States, which reflects values of the members of its society, should be reflected in our treatment of materials on the web. The freedom of speech allotted to us by the constitution should be upheld even in the face of opposition. The most compelling argument Dr. Tribe makes in his address to the *First Conference on Computers, Freedom, and Privacy* is that harmful information on the Internet might be just that, but it is not up to an individual or the government to regulate what someone can or cannot see. "The real basis for First Amendment values isn't the false premise that information and ideas have no real impact, but the belief that information and ideas are 'too important' to entrust any government censor or overseer."[7] It

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[5] Piccininni (1997).

[6] Tribe, Laurence H. "The Constitution in Cyberspace." Available online http://www.eff.org/pub/Legal/cyber_constitution.paper Laurence Tribe makes this point in a keynote address at the First Conference on Computer, Freedom, & Privacy.

[7] Tribe (1991)

is not up to the government to decide what is right for us to see on the Internet, it should be up to us to decide.

Legislation in the court system has gone back and forth on the issue of censorship. Depending on the political power of its proponents, a bill may pass or fail in Congress one moment and be overturned the next. One of the recent bills that passed in Congress that influenced this issue was the Child Pornography Protection Act (CPPA) of 1996. This bill prevents any website from displaying or describing gross sexual imposition of a minor. Most individuals would argue that this is a just law and government should be applauded for its stance on protecting our children. Jacques Catudal argues that laws like CPPA actually take our freedom to view other materials on the web, even those people may *not* find offensive. He argues, "One of CPPA's more controversial features is that it extends the definition of child pornography to include visual depictions of sexually explicit conduct that do not involve minors."[8] His main argument is that laws are too vague. Often they can be interpreted in ways they were not intended and backfire on the people who insisted on their implementation. Individuals should have a 'healthy suspicion' of government's right to legislate what we can or cannot do.

Censorship and the ALA

The American Library Association has often faced criticism for its position on total freedom of speech. It has, in all cases, upheld the notion that the use of filtering software restricts constitutionally protected speech. To the disappointment of the ALA, Congress passed its Communications Decency Act (CDA) that promoted the use of

[8] Catudal, Jacques N. "Censorship, the Internet, and the Child Pornography Law of 1996: A Critique." *Ethics and Information Technology* (1999): 105-116. Catudal is describing the negative effects of creating laws regulating pornography on the web. If those laws are too vague, they may incorporate things people may not find pornographic or offensive.

filtering software in our public libraries. The dilemma now, according to Leonard Kniffel, is the double standard in Congress. On one hand, Congress promotes the use of filtering software in library computers and in the future, may make federal funds available for aid in buying this software. On the other hand, Congress released the scandalous *Starr Report* without any hesitation. What makes this document, of all things, appropriate to put on the web when the Internet is already saturated with so many questionable documents? Kniffel thinks that "Once the Starr Report was made public, people wanted to read it, just as they want to read other materials uncensored and unrestricted by filtering software imposed by the federal government..."[9] Congress cannot impose censorship of some risqué materials and not others. This instills contradictions in our legislative system that causes confusion in the constituents of the country.

Still, the American Library Association has stood its ground in the face of many adversaries. The framers of the ALA Code of Ethics know that people in the library are human and may have a set of beliefs that may at one point, come into conflict with the ethics of the library. "Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment."[10] ALA asserts that regardless of one's person beliefs, librarians are obligated to give access to all information regardless of the content because they are the gatekeepers of information. Librarians should be committed to upholding the standards

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[9] Kniffel, Leonard. "The Decency Double Standard." *American Libraries* 29, no.10 (November 1998): 39-40. Leonard Kniffel discusses filtering and the Starr Report in "The Decency Double Standard." In this essay, he shows congresses disregard for children (even thought they passed bills like CDA) in releasing materials like the Starr Report on the Internet.

[10] American Library Association Code of Ethics can be found at http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/ethics.html.

of intellectual freedom and the right to have free access to information. Otherwise, we run the risk of abusing our power as gatekeepers. Unfortunately, it is not that easy when it comes to children's access to information.

Family Friendly Libraries (FFL) is one organization that advocates the restriction of Internet materials to individuals in the library. It is their intent to not only keep the employees who work in the library safe from a sexually-hostile working environment but to keep our children from viewing materials which may be psychologically harmful to them. They feel that blocking materials on the web is a necessary tool and it helps the library fit the needs and standards of the patrons they are serving. FFL defends their claims by stating, "Free Internet access in public libraries is a privilege, not a right. Tax payers are not obligated to supply free cyberporn access, or any cyber access, to their fellow citizens."[11] They point out that the ALA is a private organization with their own ideas about selection and those ideas are not absolutes for any library. It is up to the library itself to do what is in the best interest of its patrons and not what is in the best interest of the ALA.

Individual Attitudes on Censorship and Ethics

The issue of censorship still remains unsettled for many people. Suzanne Stauffer is a member of the debate who advocates unrestricted access to all materials available on the web. She finds that restriction on the part of a library is not only erroneous, it gives a librarian an undue power over another person's right to view materials. It is appalling to Ms. Stauffer that anyone should have the right to tell another what he/she should or should not view in a public library. She states: "The only thing more dangerous than an

[11] Family Friendly Libraries available online http://www.fflibraries.org/.

idea is a society that prohibits ideas."[12] She even goes so far as to say that the prohibition of ideas breeds fascism. The solution to the debate about controversial materials is to make available to all people materials of contrasting opinions. "Truly hateful, lying, deliberate pervasions of the truth are only effectively countered with that truth, never with the abuse of power through censorship."[13] According to Stauffer, censorship is never the answer to controversial ideas.

Contrary to Stauffer's view, many individuals think that selection is a good idea. Since censorship already exists on the governmental level, why not extend that premise the Internet? John Weckert argues that censorship of government documents on the web already exists and argues to extend this attitude towards other obviously offensive materials. He says: "There is little sense in the idea of complete freedom of expression for all. So the issue now becomes one of where to draw the lines for this freedom."[14] Weckert goes on to say that if materials viewed on the World Wide Web by library patrons are offensive to the general public, we should consider whether or not we should allow access to such materials. The safety and comfort of our patrons should come first. He cites the ideas of political philosopher John Stuart Mill[15] in his assertion that we should do what is good of the many and not necessarily what is good for the few.

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[12] Stauffer, Suzanne. "Dangerous Ideas." *Journal of Information Ethics* 6, no. 2 (Fall 1997): 10-12. The essay "Dangerous Ideas" by Suzanne Stauffer is a strong critique of filtering in libraries.

[13] Stauffer (1997).

[14] Weckert, John. "What is So Bad About Internet Content Regulation?" *Ethics and Information Technology* 2 (2000): 105-111. John Weckert's essay "What is so Bad About Internet Content Regulation" addresses some of the concerns one has in letting individuals have free reign in free speech.

[15] John Stuart Mill is a 19th century political philosopher. His theory on ethics asserts that an individual should do what *ought* to be done to maximize human welfare.

Librarians do this all the time when they select materials for their libraries. They select materials that they feel are appropriate for all patrons and not what is good for only a few.

Other individuals involved in this debate argue the Internet should be regulated since it creates a division between the person's moral condition and their online persona. In his editorial Lucas Introna "...condemns information technology for increasing the distance between flesh and blood people. The mediation of the face-to-face relation between real people by information technology will alienate individuals from the social immediacy productive of moral obligations and responsibilities."[16] This alienation will lead people to sever themselves from their moral ties and therefore would create a virtual world where chaos is the only governing rule. This world would be apropos to the creation of inappropriate materials which individuals like Mr. Introna would be opposed to our children accessing freely.

Another individual who has done research on the division of the moral self from the virtual world is Diane Michelfelder. Unlike Introna, she asserts that people can and do have moral obligations in cyberspace. Although our mind is metaphorically severed from our physical embodiment in cyberspace, it is our intellectual integrity that keeps us from behaving in an inappropriate manner. The future should be built on a cyber community that is morally 'conscious' of other members similar to the social responsibility we have in our physical world. She illuminates this point in the following passage:

> In this case, the implicit assumption is that the selves who have powers of action within the novel environment of cyberspace are not selves in any physical sense. Rather they are representations: beings without volume, mass, orientation,

[16] Introna, Lucas D. "Ethical Reflections on the Virtual Frontier." *Ethics and Information Technology* 2 (2000): 1-2. Lucas Introna is commenting on how destructive technology can be to the social network humans are used to.

> embodiment, or capacity for suffering. Conventional ethical norms and principles, however, are binding on a self whose physical embodiment is taken for granted.[17]

She illustrates in this passage that even though we do not have ties to our physical form in cyberspace, we are still bound by the same moral codes. Therefore the moral obligation of the individual should override our need to censor the Internet. The people on the Internet should be aware of their own actions and those viewing the Internet should know enough to move to a different site if the material contained within is offensive.

Another related issue is teaching ethics and moral responsibility to future librarians. It is a very important facet of this debate because ethics and professionalism in the library environment is a key part of our profession. Librarians should know the American Library Association's position on ethics and be able to compare and contrast it with their own library environment. An article by Stuart Hannabuss goes into grave detail about ethical librarianship and how to mediate between one's personal views on censoring materials and one's library's or the patron's views. He says "An important aspect of ethical behavior, too, is how ethical awareness should enhance the individual library and information worker's knowledge of his or her own personal biases."[18] Once you identify your own personal biases, it is easier to isolate them and try not to incorporate them in your work environment. Unfortunately, this is much easier said than done in this environment.

III. METHODOLOGY

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[17] Michelfelder, Diane P. "Our Moral Condition in Cyberspace." *Ethics and Information Technology* 2 (2000): 147-152.

[18] Hannabuss, Stuart. "Teaching Library and Information Ethics." *Library Management* 17, no.2 (1996): 24-35. Stuart Hannabuss' article "Teaching Library and Information Ethics" addresses personal biases and how they influence one's ethical behavior in a library environment.

The data for this study was obtained through the survey method. The individuals being surveyed for this essay were graduate students in the School of Library and Information Science at Kent State University, which also includes the Library and Information Science students in the program on the campus of Ohio State University. A copy of the questionnaire is located in the appendix of this paper. The questionnaire addressed one of the major topics in the area of censorship on the web: sex. It included a wide range of areas involving sex on the web including sexual education as well as what the average individual would consider pornographic materials. A broad range of issues was employed to pull out the variations in response to sexual materials on the Internet. This issue is not a black and white and should not be treated as such. In addition, some questions were asked about the individuals' age range, sex, and type of library with which they were associated (if any) to see if there is any correlation between any of these variables and an individual's attitudes about censorship.

IV. DATA COLLECTION AND RESULTS

Makeup of Respondents

The questionnaire passed out to the library students asked a series of background questions before it went on to ask for comments on their personal attitudes about filtering included type of library in which an individual works, gender, and age group. Questions were asked pertaining to the duration a librarian has worked in his/her current library and how long he/she had worked in the library system. This information was not used in the creation of this paper because there was no conclusive evidence of a correlation between duration in libraries and level of censorship. Perhaps if this study was larger and more thorough, a conclusion between the two might have been drawn. That was not possible because of the many constraints.

A total of 80 responses out of 300 were received to the anonymous questionnaire. Of those responses, 63 were female and 17 were male. This sample should reflect the percentages of the broader population of the school itself. The results of this survey were not controlled by distributing a specific number to each gender, library, or age to create an equal set of each group. If one were going to continue this study in a future work, they might want to create a control group to test the variables against a predefined set.

The age makeup of the respondents indicated an interesting dispersion. There were 4 groups represented with the largest response group being the 20-29 age range. The age ranges are represented in Table 1. This range seems to be telling of the makeup of the library school population. Therefore, this sample seems to accurately represent the students in the Kent State School of Library and Information Science and one can use the results to generalize using the information provided by the respondents in this essay.

Table 1.

Distribution of Age

Age Range	f	%
20-29	32	40.0
30-39	26	32.5
40-49	14	17.5
50-59	8	10.0
Total	80	100.0

The library affiliation component was also rather predictable. There were four library categories for students to choose from. The categories may or may not represent the student's current library affiliation but at some time in their academic career, they have worked in one of the following types of libraries: academic, public, school, and special. If the student had no prior experience in a library, they were given the option of choosing "none". The library affiliation is depicted in Table 2.

Table 2.

Distribution of Library Types

Library Type	f	%
Public	31	38.8
Academic	21	26.3
None	16	20.0
Special	7	8.8
School	5	6.3
Total	80	100.0

Comparison of Attitudes on Internet Related Issues

This section of the study will compare the responses collected from the study to the gender, age, and library affiliation of the respondents to identify a pattern of attitudes that may relate to one or more factors. The purpose was to determine if there were a correlation between these factors and the attitudes taken on particular issues. Three different choices were provided for the respondents which asked them to choose the one that most closely reflected their point of view on filtering: no censorship, filtering on children's terminals, and total filtration. The task for the respondent was to indicate the extent to which they might filter the content of particular websites according to the ten scenarios provided. The topics covered in this survey deal with sex education, contraception, adult entertainment, sexual health, and sexually transmitted diseases. The questions asked cover both attitudes about text only sites and websites that have illustrations or pictures pertaining to the issue indicated. This distinction was made because many people would not mind sexually explicit materials to be shown on a screen in their library if that material was in written form so that other people in the library would not necessarily be exposed to it.

The first measure addressed the overall results of the study. Then the study progressed through the three variables to determine, perhaps, a correlation between the variables and the responses. The following table reflects the overall responses to the survey and how people felt about these issues. The first frequency (f_1) reflects the totally unfiltered position, the second frequency (f_2) reflects filtered for children only, and the third frequency (f_3) is filtered on all computers. These three frequencies pertain to the rest of the tables in this essay.

Table 3.

Distribution of Attitudes on Filtering

Topic	f_1	f_2	f_3
Sexuality Education	49	26	5
Sexuality Education (text only)	63	15	2
Contraception	54	22	4
Contraception (text only)	62	17	1
Sexually explicit	20	27	33
Sexually explicit (text only)	23	30	27
Sexual health	53	26	1
Sexual health (text only)	59	20	1
Sexually Transmitted Diseases	52	24	4
Sexually Transmitted Diseases (text only)	62	17	1

This raw data shows how the group felt on each issue as a whole. The majority of individuals feel there should be no censorship or censorship on children's terminals only except for the issue of sexually explicit materials where many felt they should be blocked from all computer terminals. This particular issue proves interesting because it shows the respondents being divided almost in thirds with the slight majority on the side of censorship. With that being said, it is important to look at the breakdown of each attribute and see if there is one particular group of respondents that are more censorious than others. In the next group of tables, this process will start by looking at the issues according to the variable "gender".

Table 4.

Distribution of Attitudes on Filtering by Gender (Female)

Topic	f_1	f_2	f_3
Sexuality Education	41	17	5
Sexuality Education (text only)	51	10	2
Contraception	44	15	4
Contraception (text only)	50	12	1
Sexually explicit	15	21	27
Sexually explicit (text only)	17	23	23
Sexual health	43	19	1
Sexual health (text only)	47	15	1
Sexually Transmitted Diseases	42	17	4
Sexually Transmitted Diseases (text only)	51	11	1

Table 5.

Distribution of Attitudes on Filtering by Gender (Male)

Topic	f_1	f_2	f_3
Sexuality Education	8	9	0
Sexuality Education (text only)	12	5	0
Contraception	10	7	0
Contraception (text only)	12	5	0
Sexually explicit	5	6	6
Sexually explicit (text only)	6	7	4
Sexual health	10	7	0
Sexual health (text only)	12	5	0
Sexually Transmitted Diseases	10	7	0
Sexually Transmitted Diseases (text only)	11	6	0

These two tables make an interesting comparison. Keeping in mind that the two groups are not equivalent in size, proportionally we can ascertain that females are less

likely to be censorious than males except for the issue of sexually explicit materials. Table 4 shows that most females advocate no censorship at all as opposed to some censorship or complete censorship. It also shows that females will advocate complete censorship more often than men.

Tables 6 through 9 correspond to the age ranges of respondents. There are four groups represented in this study: 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, and 50-59. Room was left for respondents who were older than 59 but this group did not have any respondents. The breakdown of the age responses is intended to show if there is any correlation between an individual's age and whether they support censorship.

Table 6.

Distribution of Attitudes on Filtering by Age (20-29)

Topic	f_1	f_2	f_3
Sexuality Education	21	10	1
Sexuality Education (text only)	28	4	0
Contraception	24	7	1
Contraception (text only)	27	5	0
Sexually explicit	11	10	11
Sexually explicit (text only)	12	10	10
Sexual health	25	7	0
Sexual health (text only)	25	7	0
Sexually Transmitted Diseases	22	8	2
Sexually Transmitted Diseases (text only)	27	5	0

Table 7.

Distribution of Attitudes on Filtering by Age (30-39)

Topic	f_1	f_2	f_3
Sexuality Education	14	8	4
Sexuality Education (text only)	18	6	2
Contraception	15	8	3
Contraception (text only)	17	8	1
Sexually explicit	7	7	12
Sexually explicit (text only)	7	10	9
Sexual health	15	10	1
Sexual health (text only)	18	7	1
Sexually Transmitted Diseases	15	9	2
Sexually Transmitted Diseases (text only)	18	7	1

Table 8.

Distribution of Attitudes on Filtering by Age (40-49)

Topic	f_1	f_2	f_3
Sexuality Education	10	4	0
Sexuality Education (text only)	12	2	0
Contraception	10	4	0
Contraception (text only)	12	2	0
Sexually explicit	3	6	5
Sexually explicit (text only)	3	7	4
Sexual health	12	2	0
Sexual health (text only)	11	3	0
Sexually Transmitted Diseases	10	4	0
Sexually Transmitted Diseases (text only)	12	2	0

Table 9.

Distribution of Attitudes on Filtering by Age (50-59)

Topic	f_1	f_2	f_3
Sexuality Education	4	4	0
Sexuality Education (text only)	5	3	0
Contraception	5	3	0
Contraception (text only)	6	2	0
Sexually explicit	0	2	6
Sexually explicit (text only)	1	2	5
Sexual health	4	4	0
Sexual health (text only)	5	3	0
Sexually Transmitted Diseases	5	3	0
Sexually Transmitted Diseases (text only)	5	3	0

The tables corresponding with age seem to show the 30-39 age group supports censorship more than the other three groups. The 50-59 age group was, though, the most censorious when it comes to sexually explicit materials on the web. As shown in the results, the majority of respondents support the "totally unfiltered" position across all age groups.

Table 10.

Distribution of Attitudes on Filtering by Library Type (Academic)

Topic	f_1	f_2	f_3
Sexuality Education	14	6	1
Sexuality Education (text only)	19	2	0
Contraception	17	4	0
Contraception (text only)	18	3	0
Sexually explicit	7	7	7
Sexually explicit (text only)	8	8	5
Sexual health	17	4	0
Sexual health (text only)	18	3	0
Sexually Transmitted Diseases	14	7	0
Sexually Transmitted Diseases (text only)	17	4	0

Table 11.

Distribution of Attitudes on Filtering by Library Type (Public)

Topic	f_1	f_2	f_3
Sexuality Education	23	7	1
Sexuality Education (text only)	27	3	1
Contraception	23	7	1
Contraception (text only)	25	6	0
Sexually explicit	9	11	11
Sexually explicit (text only)	11	10	10
Sexual health	23	8	0
Sexual health (text only)	24	7	0
Sexually Transmitted Diseases	24	6	1
Sexually Transmitted Diseases (text only)	27	4	0

Table 12.

Distribution of Attitudes on Filtering by Library Type (School)

Topic	f_1	f_2	f_3
Sexuality Education	2	2	1
Sexuality Education (text only)	2	3	0
Contraception	3	1	1
Contraception (text only)	3	2	0
Sexually explicit	0	1	4
Sexually explicit (text only)	0	1	4
Sexual health	2	3	0
Sexual health (text only)	2	3	0
Sexually Transmitted Diseases	2	2	1
Sexually Transmitted Diseases (text only)	3	2	0

Table 13.

Distribution of Attitudes on Filtering by Library Type (Special)

Topic	f_1	f_2	f_3
Sexuality Education	5	2	0
Sexuality Education (text only)	6	1	0
Contraception	4	3	0
Contraception (text only)	6	1	0
Sexually explicit	3	2	2
Sexually explicit (text only)	3	2	2
Sexual health	5	2	0
Sexual health (text only)	6	1	0
Sexually Transmitted Diseases	4	3	0
Sexually Transmitted Diseases (text only)	6	1	0

Table 14.

Distribution of Attitudes on Filtering by Library Type (No Affiliation)

Topic	f_1	f_2	f_3
Sexuality Education	7	8	1
Sexuality Education (text only)	11	5	0
Contraception	7	8	1
Contraception (text only)	11	5	0
Sexually explicit	1	7	8
Sexually explicit (text only)	1	9	6
Sexual health	8	8	0
Sexual health (text only)	11	5	0
Sexually Transmitted Diseases	8	7	1
Sexually Transmitted Diseases (text only)	10	6	0

Tables 10 through 14 represent the findings based on library type. School librarians were the most likely to filter on children's terminals but had an equal number who advocated no filtering with the exception of sexually explicit materials. The second most censorious group was those who have no library affiliation. In most instances, at least half of the respondents advocated filtering for children, though few advocated total filtration with the exception of sexually explicit materials. Public librarians were the least censorious proportionally, with the vast majority or respondents advocating no censorship at all followed closely by the academic librarians.

V. CONCLUSION

One of the most significant finds is related to the issue of sexually explicit materials. The results show that across all variables there are a similar or equivalent number of people who support each facet of filtration. Therefore we can assume that there is a wide range of opinions among all librarians about how filtration should be handled. Regardless of what library someone belongs to, how old they are, and what gender they are, people have a plethora of different opinions on filtration. This stands to show how deeply divided librarians are on this issue and how controversial this issue remains today.

It was the intention of this study to show how age, gender, and library affiliation plays a part in how censorious an individual would be. In this case, it did reflect this to a certain extent, but not to the extent one would have liked. Overall, the study was successful in showing that age, library affiliation, and gender do play a role, but it may not be as extensive as one might anticipated. A larger and more comprehensive study might be more successful in illuminating the differences among factors set forth in this study. The noteworthy conclusion of this study is regardless of these factors, the issue of how censorious librarians should be remains controversial within each group and will take a long time to resolve.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY

March 21, 2001

Re: Attitudes about Censoring Materials on the Web in a Library Environment

Dear Kent State Library School student:

I am a graduate student in the School of Library and Information Science at Kent State University. As part of my required project for the completion of the master's program I am conducting a study on the professional and personal attitudes of librarians concerning filtering of information viewed in libraries. The enclosed questionnaire is intended to gauge individual attitudes concerning this controversial issue.

The questionnaire is anonymous. You do not need to sign your name or indicate your identity in any way. There is no penalty if you choose not to participate and you may cease participation at any time. This study is completely voluntary and should be answered at your own discretion. I strongly encourage you to participate in this study because your input is important for understanding the intricacies of this issue. A summary of results may be obtained upon request.

If you have further questions, please contact Dr. Thomas Froehlich, my project advisor, at (330) 672-2782 or me at (330) 677-0172. If you have further questions about human subject research at Kent State University, please contact Dr. Walter C. Adams, Division of Research and Graduate Studies, at (330) 672-3012.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and time. You may return the questionnaire to box #101 in the SLIS department.

Sincerely,

Krista Harney
Graduate Student

SURVEY IN ATTITUDES ABOUT CENSORSHIP ON THE WEB

The following is a survey on individual attitudes about censorship. Please fill out the following form and return it to box #101 by April 11th. Thank you for your cooperation and participation in this study.

Please circle one of the following:

1. Sex: M F

2. Age group: 20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60+

3. Have you ever worked in a library? Y N

4. Do you currently work in a library? Y N

If you answered 'yes' to 3 or 4, then answer the following questions. Circle N/A if the question does not apply.

5. What type of library do you work in? Public Academic Special School Other
If other, please specify type: _____ N/A

6. How long have you worked at your present library? _____ N/A

7. How many years (total) have you worked in libraries? _____ N/A

8. What is your current job title? _____ N/A

9. For the types of websites noted below, indicate the extent to which you might filter the content using the categories provided. Place an "X" in the category that best reflects your feelings:

WEBSITES	TOTALLY UNFILTERED	FILTERED FOR CHILDREN'S TERMINALS ONLY	FILTERED ON ALL TERMINALS
Sexuality education materials with pictures/photographs			
Sexuality education materials (Text only)			

WEBSITES	TOTALLY UNFILTERED	FILTERED FOR CHILDREN'S TERMINALS ONLY	FILTERED ON ALL TERMINALS
Materials on contraception with pictures/photographs			
Materials on contraception (Text only)			
Sexually explicit sites (with pictures) primarily designed for adult entertainment			
Sexually explicit sites for adult entertainment (Text only)			
Materials on sexual health with pictures (e.g. internal medicine)			
Materials on sexual health (Text only)			
Materials on Sexually Transmitted Diseases with pictures			
Materials on Sexually Transmitted Diseases (Text only)			

Please check one of the following:

10. I would describe myself as POLITICALLY:

___ Very liberal
___ Liberal
___ Somewhat liberal
___ Middle of the road
___ Somewhat conservative

___ Conservative
___ Very conservative

11. I would describe myself as RELIGIOUSLY:

___ Very liberal
___ Liberal
___ Somewhat liberal
___ Middle of the road
___ Somewhat conservative
___ Conservative
___ Very conservative

Thank you for you participation in this study!

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